



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI  
**JOHN F. WOOD**

NOVEMBER 19, 2008  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## OPERATION SUSPICIOUS MINDS

### **FEDERAL INDICTMENTS CHARGE 23 DEFENDANTS IN \$2 MILLION DRUG-TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACIES, FIREARMS, IMMIGRATION VIOLATIONS**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – John F. Wood, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that 23 defendants have been indicted by a federal grand jury, in separate but related cases, as a result of Operation Suspicious Minds. Two separate drug-trafficking conspiracies are alleged to have generated approximately \$1 million each in proceeds.

“Today’s indictments will have a significant impact on drug trafficking in the Northeast area of Kansas City,” Wood said. “Law enforcement officers from several local and federal agencies worked together to conduct an extensive investigation. Thanks to their diligent efforts, a number of individuals who are allegedly responsible for a significant amount of cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana are no longer dealing on our city’s streets.”

Operation Suspicious Minds resulted in a series of three indictments that were returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008. In total, 23 defendants, primarily from the Northeast area of Kansas City, Mo., were charged in separate but related cases for their involvement in drug-trafficking conspiracies as well as firearms and immigration violations.

“Today’s execution of search warrants, arrests and seizures represent the outstanding cooperation among our law enforcement partners,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge Monte Strait. “The FBI will continue to aggressively target those criminal enterprises that represent the greatest threat to our community.”

U.S. v. San-Miguel, et al

**Dora Elena San-Miguel**, 44, **Javier Alejandro Rios-Carreon**, 36, **Anonio Quinones**, 61, **Marlon Millan**, 24, all citizens of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Mo.; **Robert Davis**, 21, and **Melvin Kerr**, 31, both of Kansas City, Mo.; **Ruben Castro**, 48, a citizen of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Kan.; **William Scott Bowen**, 39, of Salisbury, Mo.; **Moises Garcia**, 34, a citizen of Mexico residing in Gladstone, Mo.; and **Luis Chavez-Hernandez**, 35, and **Veronica Pena-Baca**, 30, both citizens of Mexico, were charged in a 10-count indictment returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Kansas City on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2008. This superseding indictment replaces an indictment that was returned on Aug. 19, 2008, which charged only **San-Miguel** and **Rios-Carreon**.

The federal indictment alleges that all of the defendants have been involved in a conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine, five kilograms or more of cocaine, and 50 kilograms or more of marijuana since Jan. 1, 2006. **Quinones** is also charged with distributing five grams or more of methamphetamine.

**Davis**, **Garcia** and **Chavez-Hernandez** are also charged with using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of marijuana. **Millan** is also charged with using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of cocaine, and with being in possession of a fraudulent or counterfeit immigration document.

In addition to the drug-trafficking conspiracy, **San-Miguel** is charged with possession with the intent to distribute cocaine. She is also charged with possessing a firearm during and in relation to a drug-trafficking crime and with being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm. **San-Miguel** was allegedly in possession of a Rohm .38-caliber pistol.

The federal indictment also contains a forfeiture allegation, which would require the defendants to forfeit \$1 million – representing the proceeds of the conspiracy. **San-Miguel** would also be required to forfeit her interest in two residential properties and **Castro** would be required to forfeit his interest in a residential property. **San-Miguel**, **Quinones** and **Pena-Baca** would also be required to forfeit their interest in their vehicles.

U.S. v. Garcia, et al

**Custodio Garcia**, 28, **Noe Garcia**, 31, and **Elsa Sanders**, 31, all citizens of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Mo.; **Miguel Escutia**, 26, **Kevin Allen**, 28, and **Heather D. Wiehe**, 28, all of Kansas City, Mo.; **Joseph W. Vargas**, 48, of Moberly, Mo.; **Ryan K. Miller**, 34, of Lee's Summit, Mo.; **Eduardo Guzman**, 24, of Kansas City, Kan.; **Rodney Hughes**, 45, of Columbia, Mo.; and **Jose Luis Flores-Pagaza**, 33, a citizen of Mexico, were charged in a 15-count indictment returned under seal on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008.

The federal indictment alleges that all of the defendants have been involved in a conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine, five kilograms or more of cocaine, and 50 kilograms or more of marijuana since Jan. 1, 2006.

In addition to the conspiracy, **Noe Garcia** and **Vargas** are charged with aiding and abetting each other to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine. **Guzman** and **Allen** are also charged with aiding and abetting each other to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine.

**Custodio Garcia** and **Flores-Pagaza** are also charged with being illegal aliens in possession of a firearm. They were allegedly in possession of a Ruger .45-caliber revolver on Feb. 22, 2008. They are also charged with aiding and abetting each other to use a firearm in relation to a drug-trafficking crime.

**Flores-Pagaza**, **Escutia** and **Hughes** are also charged with using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of cocaine. **Vargas** was also charged with using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of marijuana. **Miller** was also charged with using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of methamphetamine.

**Custodio Garcia**, **Noe Garcia**, **Flores-Pagaza**, **Escutia** and **Sanders** are also charged with illegally entering the United States from Mexico in December 2003.

The federal indictment also contains a forfeiture allegation, which would require the defendants to forfeit \$1 million – representing the proceeds of the conspiracy. **Custodio Garcia** would also be required to forfeit his interest in two residential properties; **Noe Garcia** would also be required to forfeit her interest in one residential property; and **Vargas** would be required to forfeit his interest in two residential properties. **Custodio Garcia** would also be required to forfeit his interest in five vehicles; **Noe Garcia** would be required to forfeit her interest in three vehicles; and **Flores-Pagaza** would be required to forfeit his interest in one vehicle.

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathleen D. Mahoney and Joseph M. Marquez. They were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the Jackson County Drug Task Force.

*U.S. v. Montes-Montes*

**Victor Montes-Montes**, 33, a citizen of Mexico residing in Kansas City, Mo., was charged with illegally possessing a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City on Tuesday, Nov. 18.

The federal indictment alleges that **Montes-Montes**, an illegal alien, was in possession of a Pioneer .22-caliber rifle on Nov. 7, 2008.

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brent Venneman. They were investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Wood cautioned that the charges contained in these indictments are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.